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A Close Look At CIA

THE NATIONAL soul-searching that has been brought on by the setback in Cuba has calling sharp and critical attention to the Central Intelligence Agency. As a result, Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor has been called out of retirement to investigate the CIA along with our whole intelligence structure.

There's no question that we blundered badly in our advance estimates of the Cuban show. We want to know why. More important, we want to make certain a similar fiasco doesn't happen again. The CIA shaped up as the goat for Cuba.



DULLES

It seems almost incredible that a high-powered intelligence organization could fumble a major assignment dealing with a nation as close and as well known to us as Cuba. But facts are facts. We erred badly in counting on an anti-Castro uprising. We grossly underestimate

the military strength the Sino-Soviet bloc has built in Cuba. It was the CIA's job to be accurate on these critical points.

Because of the need for secrecy, of course, most CIA operations get the hush-hush treatment. Therefore it's only when a big coup or a big setback takes place that the public knows what's going on in the organization.

However, under the leadership of Allen W. Dulles, the CIA has scored some good hits. The success of the anti-Communist revolution in Guatemala in 1954 was one. Advance knowledge of the Hungarian revolt against the Soviets in 1956 was another. So was our position in the 1956 invasion of Egypt.

Similarly, there have been blunders. The CIA (pre-Dulles) was caught off base when the North Koreans crossed the 38th parallel, and again when the Chinese Reds poured across the Yalu River. Most recently, Washington had no advance warning of the revolt of the French general in Algeria.

We cannot expect a spy network to be right all the time. But neither can we afford defeats like the Cuban fiasco.

If the Taylor inquiry only produces a better balance to our espionage operations, the world will be more secure.